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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00535 161359Z

45
ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 /012 W
---------- 129504
O 161302Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8181

UNCLAS BEIRUT 0535

FOR S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: NEWS TRANSMISSION FOR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS IN BEIRUT

REF: STATE 294749 14 DEC 75

1. TELEX SERVICE OUT OF BEIRUT INTERRUPTED. PLEASE TRANSMIT FOLLOWING TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

2. BEGIN TEXT. LEBANESE AIR FORCE JETS STRAFED PALESTINIAN AND MOSLEM FORCES NEXT TO BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FRIDAY AS MOSLEM, PLAESTINIAN AND CHRISTIANS BATTLED IN LEBANON'S CIVIL WAR. PARAGRAPH. TWO HOWKER HUNTER JETS BLASTED A PLAESTINIAN-MOSLEM LEFTIST FORCE ON A H OHWAY SOUTH OF BEIRUT, MILITARY SOURCES SAID. WHEN THEY CAME UNDER ANTIAIRCRAFT FIRE FROMA NEARBY PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP, BOURJ BARAJNEH, THEY SWOOPED OVER THE CAMP FIRING AT GUERRILLA POSITIONS. PARAGRAPH. BEIRUT AIRPORT WAS CLOSED FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR DURINGGTHE ATTACK, ACCORD-ING TO A SPOKESMAN F N MIDDLE EAST AIRLINES.
PARAGRAPH. PRIME MINISTER RASHID KARAMI,A MOSLEM,PROTESTED THE AIR FORCE INTERVENTION.THE FIRST OVERT ENTRY IN THE WAR BY THE ARMED FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN TECHINCALLY NEUTRAL IN THE NINE-MONTH STRUGGLE. PARAGRAPH. KARAMI CALLED PRESIDENT SULEIMAN FRANJIEH, A CHRISTIAN, ASKING WHO ORDERED THE ATTACK, GOVERNMENT SOURCES SAID. KAMAMI POINTED OUT HE IS ALSO DEFENSE MINISTER. PARAGRAPH. FRANJIEH REPORTEDLY REPLIED THAT HE KNEW NOWTHING ABOUT THE ATTACK. MILITARY SOURCES SAID THE AIR FORCE STRUCK AFTER QUOTE DMED ELEMENTS UNQUOTE SEIZED AN ARMY CONVOY. THE CONVOY WAS HEADED FOR
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DAMOUR, A CHRISTIAN TOWN UNDER ATTACK BYN9 LEM-PALESTINIAN

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FORCES SOUTH OF BEIRUT, TO EVACUATE CASUALITIES,A MILITARY SOURCE
SAID. PARAGRPH. PLAESTINIAN GUERRILLAS AND TOUGH MOSLEM DRUZE
MOUNTAINEERS WERE ATTACKING DAMOUR. A STATEMENT FROM THE
ATTACKERS SAID INTERIOR MINISTER CAMILLE CHAMOUN, A CHRIST-
IAN FORMER PRESIDENT, CALLED FOR ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE
INTERVENTION TO RESCUE THE TOWN OF 12,000.PARAGRAPH. CHAMOUNS
IDE MANSION IS A MILE FRO. DAMOUR. A SPOKESMAN FOR CHAMOUNS
NATIONAL LIEBERAL PARTY SSID ATTACKERS PUNCHED INTO THE
EAST EDGE OF THE TOWN QUOTE COMITTING A TERRIBLE MASSACRE
KILLING 30 WOMEN AND CHILDREN UNQUOTE. THE SPOKESMAN SAID
CHRISTIANS WERE DEFENDING HOUSE TO HOUSE. PARAGRAPH.
POLICE SAID 116 WERE KILLED AND 200 WOUNDED IN THURSDAY
AND OVERNIGHT FIGHTING BRINGING NINE-MONTH DEATH TOLL OVER 9,000.
PARAPGRAPH. ROCKETS AND MORTAR SHELLS EXPLODED AT THE
PRIME MINISTRY AND OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL BANK AS STREET
BATTLES SWEPT THE WATELAND OF BEIRUT'S QUOTE WALL STREET
UNQUOTE HOUSING 76AMERICAN, EUROPEAN AND ARAB BANKS ALL
CLOSED BY THE FIGHTING. PARAGRAPH. QUOTE HOSPITALS ARE
FULL AND SCORES OF FAMILIES IN THE MOSLEM-POPULATED SLUM
OF KARANTINA DIED AS FIRES BURNED THEIR HUTS OUT OF
EXISTANCE . QUOTE WE DON'T KNOW HOW MANY PERISHED UNQOTE A
POLICE SPOKESMAN SAID. PARAGRAPH. KARANTINA, BEIRUT'S
SLAUGHTERHOUSE DISTRICT AND A MOSLEM POCKET IN THE
CHRISTIAN AREA OF EAST BEIRUT WAS SHELLED THROUGH THE
NIGHT BY CHRISTIAN FORCES. PARAGRAPH. FIGHTING ALSO
WENT ON IN THE EASTERN TOWN OF ZAHLE, THE NORTHERN PORT
OF TRIPOLI, AROUND TWO PALESTINIAN CAMPS, TEL ZAATER AND JISR EL
BASHA. IN THE CHRISTIAN SUBURBS OF BEIRUT AND IN THE
NORTHERMOST PROVINCE OF AKKAR, NEAR THE SYRIAN BORDER.
PARAGRPAH. SYRIAN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF HIKMET CHEHABI
ARRIVED FRIDAY FROM DAMASCUS TO MEDIATE. END. PLEASE
ADD BACKGROUND. TRY PHONING IN 242843 AND 369194.
LUDINGTON 16/1. END TEXT.
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